

**A**  
**HOW TO PREPARE GUIDE**  
**FOR THE**  
**STATE CAPITOL POLICE OFFICER**  
**60637**  
**WRITTEN EXAMINATION**



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**How to Prepare  
for the  
State Capitol Police Officer (60637)  
Written Examination**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of these instructions is to help you prepare for the written, multiple-choice examination which is being given for the entry-level State Capitol Police Officer classification with the State of Alabama. It is very important that you sit down in a quiet place and review the material in this book. You should also set aside time to practice doing the things that are suggested in this guide to prepare for the examination. Please remember that the material in this guide is designed to help you prepare for the exam. You will not need the material in this guide at the time you actually take the exam. Therefore, you will not be allowed to carry this guide into the exam session.

**II. JOB PREVIEW**

State Capitol Police Officers work in Montgomery for the Department of Public Safety.

State Capitol Police Officers perform law enforcement work involving high visibility patrol and security within the capitol complex and other state-owned buildings throughout the Montgomery regional area. Employees in this class enforce laws; ensure security of public buildings, property, and persons; and perform related law enforcement duties via operation of patrol vehicles, foot patrol, physical security, and office work as required to prevent/repress crime and apprehend suspects. Work is evaluated through direct observation by a supervisor.

### **III. EXAM INFORMATION**

A study of the State Capitol Police Officer classification was conducted which revealed knowledges and abilities that are important and needed the first day on the job, before a new employee receives any training for this position. Listed below are the knowledges and abilities that were determined to be important and necessary the first day on the job and that will be measured on the examination:

- Knowledge of the English language to include grammar, spelling, word usage, and punctuation as needed to compose documents, complete departmental forms, and compile reports.
- Knowledge of basic math such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division as needed to perform various tasks on a daily basis.
- Ability to read and comprehend written information/instructions to include Capitol Police/Public Safety departmental rules and regulations, and SOPs as needed to determine proper procedures and perform duties appropriately.
- Ability to read maps and charts as needed to arrive at the correct destination.
- Ability to prioritize work such as emergency calls, complaints, investigative activities, and routine patrol duties as needed to perform duties effectively.
- Ability to make effective decisions/appropriate judgments under a variety of conditions and time constraints.
- Ability to create and maintain a filing system and personal records as needed to store/retrieve information.
- Ability to proofread paperwork to identify errors and ensure it is accurately prepared.
- Ability to arrange information into a logical order as needed to establish a chain of events.

#### IV. PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

Following are some suggestions for what to do before the exam. This section covers arriving at the exam location on time and with the proper things that you will need to take the test.

- Be well rested. Get a good night's sleep for several nights in a row before the written examination.
- Allow plenty of time to get to the examination site. If you are rushed and late, you will be upset when you get there. Plan to get there at least 20 minutes before time for the examination to begin. Allow time to find the testing location, park your vehicle, walk to the facility, and locate the testing room.
- Do not bring cell phones to the testing site. Pagers should only be brought if it is absolutely necessary. All pagers must be set to vibration mode.
- Dress comfortably. You may be at the exam site for up to three (3) hours.
- Read and study this guide. The KSAs measured by the exam are listed on page 4. Practice the kinds of things that this guide suggests that you practice.
- Do **not** bring this How to Prepare Guide, other guides, manuals, notes, reading materials, or study materials to the testing site. You **will not** be permitted to bring them into the testing room. All materials needed to complete the exam will be given to you at the exam.
- You should bring the schedule postcard that you receive in the mail from the State of Alabama Personnel Department to the examination site.
- To protect your own interests, you will also be asked to bring picture identification to the examination site. Acceptable forms of identification include a valid driver's license, a military identification card, or a student identification card. You only need one form of picture identification.
- Bring several number 2 pencils with erasers to the exam. It is also recommended that you bring a highlighter pen and a calculator. Small solar powered or battery operated calculators that perform basic functions such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, square roots, or percentages are allowed. Calculators that plug-in, utilize tape, or have word processing, spelling, thesauruses, or other storage and retrieval capabilities (except basic memory functions) are not allowed. Calculators that are a feature on a cell phone are not permitted. Calculators are subject to inspection by exam monitors. Applicants may not borrow or share calculators at the exam site.

## **V. TAKING THE EXAM**

### **Suggestions for Taking the Exam**

- Read the questions carefully. Be sure you understand what the question asks and what the choices say before you try to answer the question. On every test, people choose wrong answers simply because they failed to pay attention to part of the question or failed to read all of the answers. You should always check to make sure that your answers to questions are marked in the location on the answer sheet that matches the number of the question you are answering.
- After reading each question and the possible answers, make a decision about each question.
  - You may decide you know the answer. Mark your answer on the answer sheet. Spend no more time on that question.
  - You may decide you are fairly sure of the answer, but may want to think more about it. Mark your answer sheet and make a note of it in the test booklet so it will be easier to find later.
  - You may decide one or two answers are definitely not the best. Eliminate the answers you know are wrong, and then direct your attention to the remaining choices that are potentially correct.
  - You may decide that figuring out the answer is possible, but will take you a lot of time. Do not mark any answer. Note the question in your test booklet so you can find it when you are ready to come back to it. Make sure you finish the test in enough time to come back to answer the question.
  - You may decide you do not know the answer and that all you can do is guess. Make a guess, and mark the answer sheet to show your answer. Do not waste any more time on that question. There is no penalty for guessing and sometimes you may guess right.
- Do not change answers unless you have a good reason. When people change their answers, they more often change from a right answer to a wrong one rather than from a wrong answer to a right one. The reason seems to be that they start thinking about some specific case, which results in choosing an answer on the basis of facts or circumstances that are not given in the question. Other times, people think about what some part of a question says and forget about what the rest of the question said.

- Use your time efficiently. You have a maximum of three (3) hours to complete the exam so you should use your time wisely. Realize some sections of the test will be more time consuming than others. Likewise, some questions will take longer to answer than other questions. You should budget your time so that you do not use too much time on one section or one question. If you do not budget your time wisely, you may not have time to complete the exam and answer questions to which you know the answer. If you have time remaining after you have completed the test, it is always a good idea to review your responses on the more difficult questions.
- Do not give up. In an exam, some questions are easy and some are difficult. If the question seems difficult, they become discouraged and do not even try to determine the correct answer. If it is hard for you to figure out an answer, it is probably hard for other people too. You should mark an answer on your answer sheet for every question, even if it is a guess. You will not be penalized for guessing. Again, be sure not to spend too much time on a question to which you do not know the answer. Keep your mind on the test, and try to answer every question.
- An examination monitor will be at your test site when you report. The monitor will check your picture identification and schedule postcard, and then will provide you with instructions.
  - The examination monitor will provide you with instructions concerning restroom availability during the test administration. Remember that time you take to use the rest room is time away from working on the examination.
  - You are not to open any examination booklets or begin working on the exam until you are instructed by the monitor to do so.
  - Candidates making any disturbances or caught cheating will be disqualified from the exam.
  - Test monitors can only answer questions concerning exam administration issues. They **will not** be able to interpret or clarify exam questions for you.

## **Study Suggestions**

You may find some of the following ideas helpful in preparing for the exam:

- Do not prepare for the exam in a single session.
- Study in a quiet place. Do not study when you are doing something else.
- Make up your own test questions and take them.
- Study the Sample Test Items in this How to Prepare Guide.
- Study whatever material you believe will assist you in learning the knowledges and abilities (see page 4 of this guide) that will be measured by the State Capitol Police Officer examination.

In summary, there are two things you can do that will make you feel more comfortable taking the exam: 1) follow the guidelines presented in this guide on how to prepare for the exam and 2) become familiar with what kinds of questions will be included on the exam.



## **VI. SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The examination for State Capitol Police Officer will measure the knowledges and abilities that appear on the preceding page. You will have up to three (3) hours to complete the examination. The exam consists of 96 multiple-choice questions that are divided into nine (9) sections. Examples of test questions from each section are below. Please review these sample questions in order to familiarize yourself with the kinds of questions on the exam and the format of the exam.

### **SECTION 1 MATH**

1.  $28,904.63 + 5,693 + 74,953.45$  equals \_\_\_\_\_.  
  
A. 109,515.08  
B. 109,551.08  
C. 109,821.08  
D. 109,820.88
  
2. Captain Marshall wrote 17 tickets totaling to the amount of \$8,092.60. What is the average cost of each ticket? (Round to the nearest cent.)  
  
A. \$467.03  
B. \$476.00  
C. \$476.04  
D. \$474.03

### **SECTION 2 ENGLISH**

1. Which of the following sentences represents standard English grammar?  
  
A. Each of the new officers were carefully instructed regarding his/her work.  
B. Each of the new officers was carefully instructed regarding his/her work.  
C. Every one of the new officers was carefully instructed regarding their work.  
D. Either of the new officers need careful instruction regarding their work.
  
2. The electrical storm \_\_\_\_\_ the police officers from completing their jobs.  
  
A. was preventing  
B. has preventing  
C. had preventing  
D. were preventing

### **SECTION 3**

#### **READING AND COMPREHENSION**

A supervisor may authorize an employee to attend a police association meeting during normal working hours if adequate manpower conditions exist. The employee will be required to work additional hours to make-up the time he/she was absent from his/her job. State vehicles will not be used for travel to an association meeting nor will per diem be paid unless authorized by a Division Chief.

1. State vehicles should \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. never be used to travel to a police association meeting
  - B. be used to travel to a police association meeting only if authorized by the Division Chief
  - C. be used to travel to a police association meeting only if per diem is not available
  - D. always be used to travel to a police association meeting
2. A supervisor may authorize an employee to attend a meeting during normal working hours \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. if there is a shortage of manpower
  - B. if a meeting is scheduled
  - C. if there is adequate manpower
  - D. if no one else wants to attend

### **SECTION 4**

#### **FILING SYSTEM**

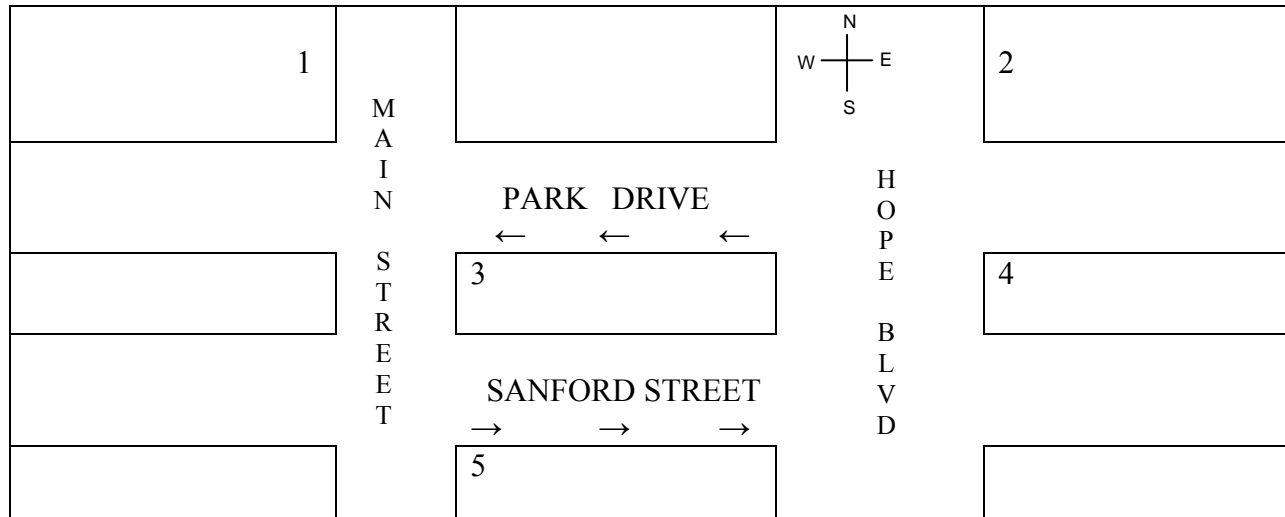
1. Arrange the following items in alphabetical order for filing.
  1. Gehrke, La Verne
  2. Geiser, Doris
  3. Gehrke, Lawrence
  4. Geiger, Donna
  - A. 1, 3, 2, 4
  - B. 1, 3, 4, 2
  - C. 3, 1, 4, 2
  - D. 3, 1, 2, 4
2. Social Security Number 117-57-3545 would be filed between:
  - A. 117-55-9636 and 117-57-1587
  - B. 117-57-3164 and 117-57-3459
  - C. 117-57-3524 and 117-57-3554
  - D. 117-58-3030 and 117-58-3892

**SECTION 5**  
**MAPS AND CHARTS**

	Anapoly	Haywood	Somata	Springfield
Anapoly	0	158	91	267
Haywood	158	0	67	298
Somata	91	67	0	402
Springfield	267	298	402	0

1. According to the above chart what is the distance from Springfield to Somata?

- A. 158
- B. 267
- C. 402
- D. 91



**\*Arrows indicate one-way streets.**

2. According to the above map, what route would you take to get to Park Drive from corner 5?
- A. east on Sanford Street, north on Hope Blvd., west on Park Drive
  - B. west on Sanford Street, south on Main Street, east on Park Drive
  - C. east on Sanford Street, south on Hope Blvd., west on Park Drive
  - D. west on Sanford Street, north on Hope Blvd., west on Park Drive

## **SECTION 6**

### **PRIORITIZING**

1. The following calls are received at the same time in your patrol area: a garnishment needs to be delivered to a local business, a political campaign sign has been placed in an unauthorized area, a gunshot was fired in the house next door, and a car with a flat tire has pulled off to the side of a rarely traveled road. Which of the calls should you respond to first?
  - A. a garnishment needs to be delivered to a local business
  - B. a political campaign sign has been placed in an unauthorized area
  - C. a gunshot was fired in the house next door
  - D. a car with a flat tire has pulled off to the side of a rarely traveled road
  
2. The following calls are received at the same time in your patrol area: a hospital employee cannot get her car started, a vagrant is sleeping on the bus stop bench, kids are riding bicycles in a nearby field and making too much noise, and a pedestrian has been struck by a motorcycle.
  - A. a hospital employee cannot get her car started
  - B. a vagrant is sleeping on the bus stop bench
  - C. kids are riding bicycles in a nearby field
  - D. a pedestrian has been struck by a motorcycle

## **SECTION 7**

### **LOGICAL ORDER**

The following sentences concern the events that occurred during alleged criminal acts. Each sentence is preceded by the identifying letters A, B, C, or D. The sentences are arranged so that the proper sequence of events has been scrambled. The questions following the sentences deal with when each event occurred during the alleged criminal act. Mark on your answer sheet the identifying letter of the statement that answers the following questions.

- A. As he approached the driver, he smelled alcohol on his breath.
- B. Officer James saw a sports car driving erratically.
- C. He turned on his sirens and pulled the car over to the roadside.
- D. Officer James administered a field sobriety test to the driver and arrested him for DUI.

1. What happened first?
2. What happened second?
3. What happened third?

## **SECTION 8**

### **DECISION MAKING**

Gordon Peters is a tall, thin, white male, age 52. He sells life insurance to state employees. He smokes cigars.

Evan Rudd is an average-sized, black male, age 29. He is a local television anchorman. He frequents the building to gather information and perform newscasts about current events.

Vinko Weizof is a small, short, white male, age 35. He immigrated to this country a few years ago and is currently a contract worker who landscapes the grounds of the building.

Ralph Tolbert is a short, stocky, white male, age 23. He eats breakfast and reads the newspaper every morning in the cafeteria.

Joe Sandborn is a tall, black male, age 45. He is tax accountant for several of the employees in the building. He frequently delivers tax papers to them.

Which of the suspects would you suspect most if:

1. A witness saw a man leaving the area with a section of the newspaper.

- A. Gordon Peters
- B. Ralph Tolbert
- C. Evan Rudd
- D. Joe Sandborn

2. A witness described a mugger as smelling like a cigar.

- A. Vinko Weizof
- B. Ralph Tolbert
- C. Gordon Peters
- D. Evan Rudd

## **SECTION 9**

### **PROOFREADING**

INSTRUCTIONS: In this section each question represents a portion of a written passage. You should read the passage and determine how many misspelled words are contained in each line.

The parking ticket must be paid within six days of the issue date. If payment is not recieved within six days from the date of issue, a note will be placed on your driving record statting that you have unpiad fines.

1. The parking ticket must be paid within six days of the issue date.
  - A. The line contains no spelling errors.
  - B. There is one (1) spelling error in the line.
  - C. There are two (2) spelling errors in the line.
  - D. There are three (3) or more spelling errors in the line.
  
2. If payment is not recieved within six days from the date of issue, a note will be placed on your driving record statting that you have unpiad fines.
  - A. The line contains no spelling errors.
  - B. There is one (1) spelling error in the line.
  - C. There are two (2) spelling errors in the line.
  - D. There are three (3) or more spelling errors in the line.

## **ANSWERS TO SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

### **SECTION 1 MATH**

1. B - 109,551.08
2. C - \$476.04

### **SECTION 2 ENGLISH**

1. B - Each of the new officers was carefully instructed regarding his/her work.
2. A - was preventing

### **SECTION 3 READING AND COMPREHENSION**

1. B - be used to travel to a police association meeting only if authorized by the Division Chief
2. C - if there is adequate manpower

### **SECTION 4 FILING SYSTEM**

1. B - 1, 3, 4, 2
2. C - 117-57-3524 and 117-57-3554

### **SECTION 5 MAPS AND CHARTS**

1. C - 402
2. A - east on Sanford Street, north on Hope Blvd., west on Park Drive

### **SECTION 6 PRIORITIZING**

1. C - a gunshot was fired in the house next door
2. D - a pedestrian has been struck by a motorcycle

**SECTION 7**  
**LOGICAL ORDER**

1. B
2. C
3. A

**SECTION 8**  
**DECISION MAKING**

1. B - Ralph Tolbert
2. C - Gordon Peters

**SECTION 9**  
**PROOF READING**

1. B - There is one (1) spelling error in the line.
2. D - There are three (3) or more spelling errors in the line.



## **VII. EXAM CONTACT**

You should contact the State Personnel Department if you have questions about the examination. The contact person for the State Capitol Police Officer examination is Jennifer H. Thomasson. If you have questions, please call her at (334) 242-3389.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

If you would like to request special testing accommodations or have any questions concerning the test site or testing conditions, please contact the State Personnel Department at the phone number above.

### **Rescheduling**

When you receive your schedule postcard in the mail, contact the State Personnel Department if there is a conflict and you cannot attend the test. You should write "Reschedule" on your schedule postcard and return it to State Personnel at the return address on the card. You will be rescheduled for the next test administration date in approximately two to three months.

### **Scoring**

You should receive notification of your score by postcard in approximately 4 to 6 weeks.

### **Your Standing**

State Personnel staff members cannot provide you with grade information over the phone; however, you may get your rank (or standing) on any state register by calling the Standing Hotline. The Standing Hotline operates from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. every Monday and Wednesday. The number is (334) 242-3672. Make sure that you have your social security number and the job classification code for this job (60637) available when you call.

You may also check your standing on the State Personnel Department web site. Go to [www.personnel.state.al.us](http://www.personnel.state.al.us) and follow the directions to receive your standing via e-mail.

## **VIII. BANDED SCORING**

When the written exam for State Capitol Police Officer is graded, the scores will be grouped into bands. When you receive notification of your score on the exam, you will not be given a numerical score (e.g., 90 out of 96, 83 out of 96). Rather, you will be informed into which band your score fell (e.g., Band 1, Band 2, Band 3). The following information should help you understand the banding procedure.

### **What is Banding?**

Banding is one way to reduce the impact of fluctuations in test scores that do not provide meaningful information about differences in the ability to do the job. One important purpose of testing is to identify the differences in test scores that reflect real differences among candidates. Banded scoring is a statistical procedure for grouping raw test scores that statistically are not meaningfully different from one another. In banded scoring, bands are set objectively and mathematically. They are not manipulated arbitrarily.

### **Misconceptions about Banding**

There are many misconceptions about banding and the use of banded scores. Some of the most common misconceptions are listed below. Each misconception is followed by a clarification.

- **Misconception: Each band should have the same number of people.**

The people in a band are similar to each other in that statistically there is no meaningful difference in their scores. Sometimes Band 1 may be very large and at other times it may be small. We do not force bands to be a certain size. The size of the bands is based on the scores people make.

- **Misconception: Band numbers have no meaning. I don't have a score.**

Think of a band as a group of tied scores that statistically are not meaningfully different. In school, two students with average grades of 94.5 and 94.3 would both be grouped into a band called "A" because the scores are very close and the teacher cannot be sure that 0.2 of a point is a real difference in achievement. Think of scores on achievement tests children take in school. The fine print on the tests always cautions you not to focus on the numerical score but rather on the comparative score which uses some grouping technique such as percentiles, stanines, standard deviations, grade levels, etc. These grouping techniques are considered forms of banding.

- **Misconception: Band numbers are the same as letter grades.**

Band 1 does not equate to an "A," Band 2 to a "B," etc. In school, a predetermined numerical range of scores (e.g., 90-100) equals an A. In banding, scores are banded only in relation to one another. Unlike grade school bands, the width of bands is not set in advance. You compete against your peers only, and your scores are set in relation to your peers.

- **Misconception: A band score on one test has the same value as a band score on another test.**

Banded scores are test specific and cannot be compared to banded scores on other tests.

- **Misconception: People who have been on the job longest should be in the top bands.**

Time spent in a job may not be the same as skill in doing the job. The people with the strongest skills (or who did best on the exam) should be in the top bands. Some of these people will have been in the job longer than others, but years of service do not always equal proficiency.

- **Misconception: A standing in Band 4 or below automatically indicates failure or ineligibility for jobs.**

This statement is false. A band score of 4 or lower is not automatically equated with failure. The true test of your employment opportunities is whether or not you can be certified and considered for a job vacancy.

- **Misconception: Banding replaced the “Rule of 10”.**

Banding did not replace the “Rule of 10”. The “Rule of 10” determines the number of bands to be certified. In the past, tied scores referred to an actual numerical score (e.g., two candidates with a score of 98 were considered tied) while now all of the scores within a band are considered tied.

- **Misconception: People in a band do not differ.**

When several people are placed in the same band, it does not mean that those people do not differ. Instead, it means that their scores on the exam do not differ enough to be separate scores.

## IX. STATE PERSONNEL TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are used by State Personnel regarding test scores and employment that results from those scores. This section is provided to help you understand State Personnel terminology and procedures.

**Register:** A register is a list of all individuals who have successfully completed the selection procedure for a State Merit System job. The register is a complete list of individuals who are eligible for employment in a certain job classification.

**Certification:** A certification is a list of the top ten individuals on an employment register. These individuals are able to be appointed immediately to State Merit System job classifications. A register that uses Banded Scoring may produce a certification with more than ten names. Since individuals within a band are considered to be tied, the certification cannot split up a band. If Band 1 contains 15 names, then all 15 names will be on the certification. Likewise, if Band 1 contains 3 names and Band 2 contains 25 names, then all names of individuals in both Bands 1 and 2 would be on the certification. Certifications may be statewide or specific to a county within the state.

**Test Failure:** Some multiple-choice tests administered by the state use a Pass/Fail point to identify individuals who failed the test. All candidates receive a grade report after taking a state test. If you pass an exam, you receive a numerical score or a banded score in the mail. If you fail an exam, you receive notification in the mail that you did not pass the exam.